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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2735
RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 3824
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 0255
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 4035
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA PRIORITY 0175

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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IR](#) [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [IAEA](#)
SUBJECT: ITALY: REACTION TO REPORT OF QOM URANIUM

ENRICHMENT FACILITY

REF: STATE 99897

Classified By: DCM Elizabeth L Dibble for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Post delivered reftel points to Minister Filippo Formica, Deputy Director General for Multilateral Political Cooperation, accompanied by the French Political Counselor to Rome, and a political officer from the UK Embassy. After presenting points, we emphasized the U.S. desire to work fully in synch with the GOI and to have full GOI public support for the position outlined. Post also shared points with Political Director De Bernardin. We will follow up jointly with French and UK colleagues with the Iran office director.

¶2. (C) Formica, a non proliferation expert who has worked Iran sanctions issues for some years, said he looked forward to the prospect of undertaking future efforts together with us. The only option at this point, he said, is the "dual track" option we are pursuing (post had briefed Formica earlier in the day on the October 7th experts meeting in Washington). He said there was no alternative but to consider sanctions at some point. He said he also looked forward to the meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors and to the Oct 1 P5 1 meeting, and was optimistic that a serious process was getting started. He noted that it was important to keep in mind that the choice of moving toward a nuclear weapon was not irreversible, as we had seen in the case of Kazakhstan and others.

¶3. (C) Formica had questions as to our estimation of when the site near Qom was begun, and whether in our view Iran was implementing the Additional Protocol at that time.

¶4. (SBU) Regarding public statements, on September 25, in response to the report of Iran's covert uranium enrichment plant near the city of Qom, Prime Minister Berlusconi's Office issued a statement saying that Italy "associates itself with the statements by President Obama, UK PM Brown and French President Sarkozy this morning on Iran's new illegal nuclear enrichment plant." The statement went on to say that "Italy is against Iran developing a military nuclear program and hopes Tehran will shed full light on its nuclear program, as requested by the International Atomic Energy Agency and the UN Security Council. The Italian Government hopes that the upcoming round of negotiations that will begin on October 1 will shed light also on this point, and that on that occasion, Iran will begin to show concretely its willingness to negotiate on the nuclear issue and on other topical, sensitive international issues."

¶5. (SBU) While the MFA did not issue a statement at that time, following Tehran's test missile launch, FM Frattini publicly commented that "Iran must stop its missile testing, thereby proving its good faith and willingness to dialogue

and collaborate with the IC on the eve of the Geneva talks. It is not through missiles or nuclear threats that Tehran will see its regional and international role recognized and be able to guarantee its people's prosperity... Iran must respond to the IC's outstretched hand with the hand of dialogue, not with missile threats."

End text.
THORNE